

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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FM AMCONSUL SAO PAULO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7799
INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO

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JOINT STATE USIS MESSAGE

5. EDITORIAL CHANGES. SINCE THE MANAGEMENT REALIGNMENT AT O ESTADO, THE PAPER HAS BECOME EDITORIALLY MORE CONSERVATIVE. O ESTADO HAS COME AROUND 180 DEGREES IN ITS OPINION ON STUDENT PROTESTS FROM JUNE 3, WHEN IT PUBLISHED A LIBERAL PIECE SUGGESTING THAT THE STUDENTS WERE FLEETING URBAN MIDDLE CLASS OPINION, TO JANUARY 7, WHEN IT FOUND COMMUNISTS DANGEROUSLY INFLUENCING STUDENT PROTESTS. SERGIO MOTTA MELLO TOLD CONGEN OFF THAT THE LATTER EDITORIAL WAS "WRITEN TO ORDER" FOR RUI MESQUITA. MOTTA MELLO SAID THAT RUI MESQUITA HAD ALSO ORDERED AN ABOUT FACE IN THE PAPER'S HANDLING OF THE CHARGES AGAINST DEPUTY MARCOS TITO. RUI MESQUITA FAVORS HIS CASSATION. EDITORIALS FOR THE PAST WEEK HAVE EITHER FOLLOWED THE NEW ORIENTATION ON SPECIFIC ISSUES, OR HAVE COVERED ONE OF THE MESQUITA FAMILY'S IDEOLOGICAL WARHOURSSES, SUCH AS THE COLD WAR OR CUBA.

6. ANGLING FOR GOVERNMENT SUPPORT? SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH THE CHANGES DESCRIBED ABOVE, THE GOVERNMENT HAS BEGUN TO TAKE OUT HALF PAGE ADS FOR GOVERNMENT ENTERPRISES SUCH AS THE BANK OF BRAZIL AND THE POST OFFICE. MOTTA MELLO SAID THAT JULIO MESQUITA NETO HAD CALLED ON FINANCE MINISTER SIMONSEN AT THE END OF MAY.

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THE APPARENT RESULTS WERE A TONING DOWN OF ESTADO'S CRITICISM OF THE GOVERNMENT AND AN INCREASE IN ITS ADVERTISING--AND A LONG, LAUDATORY PIECE ON SIMONSEN.

7. COMMENT: O ESTADO, BECAUE OF ITS IMPECCABLE REVOLUTIONARY CREDENTIALS, HAS BEEN ONE OF THE MOST DAMAGING CRITICS OF THE GEISEL ADMINISTRATION AND THE REGIME IN RECENT MONTHS. (AS LATE AS APRIL, ESTADO EDITORIALLY WAS ACCUSING GEISEL OF RUNNING THE COUNTRY LIKE CEASAR AND OF SECRETLY WANTING TO CONTINUE IN OFFICE BEYOND THE EXPIRATION OF HIS TERM.) ALTHOUGH ESTADO IS EXPECTED

TO CONTINUE ITS CAMPAIGNS FOR DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS AND AGAINST
CORRUPTION, MODERATION OF ITS HARSH CRITICISM WILL REMOVE AN
IMPORTANT THORN FROM THE REVOLUTION'S SIDE. MORE DETAILED USIS
MESSAGE FOLLOWS.

CHAPIN

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